

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

THE WORLD BANK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, when the World Bank was founded in 1944, its official title was the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the IBRD. The reconstruction of Europe and Asia was the primary mission of the World Bank, and reconstruction has always been central to the Bank's mission.

Since 1944, the Bank has helped Germany and Japan rebuild. It was then crucial to the reconstruction of South Korea and played a key role in the renaissance of Eastern Europe after the fall of communism. Today, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and many Eastern European nations have now become donors to the Bank, supporting its work, rather than recipients.

As of today, I am the only Member of Congress who has served in the World Bank, and it is a noble institution, with thousands of professional staff helping people in poorer nations rise up to realize their full potential. The challenge before the Bank today has been the reconstruction of Iraq. Republicans and Democrats by wide margins agree that the international community should do more through multilateral institutions in helping the people of Iraq build greater incomes and more security and do it in cooperation with other nations.

But there is a problem. There is a very disappointing record of the World Bank in Iraq. The World Bank promised Iraq \$387 million in cash to be contributed for the benefit of the Iraqi people, and as of just 6 months ago the Bank has committed only \$43.6 million for the reconstruction of Iraq, about 13 percent of what was actually promised. Now, 2 years later after the fall of Saddam Hussein, the problem is worse because the pace of World Bank funding for projects in Iraq is extraordinarily slow. As of just 6 months ago, there were only nine postings for projects in Iraq funded by the World Bank.

This is an institution which not only promised \$387 million from its own account but also led a pledging conference, putting together \$32 billion in pledges for the people of Iraq. To compare, the United States pledged \$18.4 billion for the reconstruction and has already obligated 7 billion of that. Of the 32 billion, only a tiny percentage has been completed.

Much of the fault of this very slow progress is at the hands of the current

President of the World Bank, President Wolfensohn. President Wolfensohn to date has not allowed any World Bank staff to be stationed in Iraq. Despite the presence of hundreds of international staff working for a wide variety of international development organizations, President Wolfensohn will not even allow staff of the World Bank to volunteer to do the important work of helping the Iraqi people build a new democracy and create higher incomes for Iraqi working families.

That is why it was such good news to hear that Paul Wolfowitz will be named as the United States' new nominee to take over the World Bank in July. No one more than Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz knows how important it is to set a new example of helping the international community to help a democracy rise in Iraq.

We have seen great changes in the Middle East of late, in Syria and in Egypt and in other places, just sponsored by what has already happened in Iraq. Think if we could actually have a president of the World Bank put to use the \$32 billion in international funds or at least the \$387 million promised by World Bank to actually help the people of Iraq. From my view, we could not have Secretary Wolfowitz take over the leadership of the Bank faster. Under President Wolfensohn we are mired in the mud, unable to move very much assistance, and unable to do what on a bipartisan level so many of us want to do, to get the international community involved in the reconstruction of Iraq and the building of a new democracy.

I am very happy with this new nomination. I think Secretary Wolfowitz as an Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, as our Ambassador to Indonesia, and as someone who has provide a leadership role in the Department of Defense, can make a real difference. With more aid to Iraq and more reconstruction, we can bring the troops home faster.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CARDOZA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COOPER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ROSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the 2006 budget that we just passed that now moves to a conference committee makes the wrong choices for our Nation. It reflects secured priorities and runs counter to our deepest held beliefs. This budget embraces disastrous economic policies while at the same time fails to put forward a vision of what this great country of the United States should be.

What America needs instead are responsible policies that reflect our values and helps bring our Nation together and invests in the future by expanding opportunity. But this budget proposes to cut vital domestic investments and services for the middle class, for our veterans, for our seniors, for our children, for the needy among us, while continuing to accumulate a huge budget deficit.

And, Mr. Speaker, there is no State in the union that is hurt more from this budget, from the cuts of it these budgets, than our State of Georgia. And keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, this is a State that just recently voted overwhelmingly for the President. But yet here we are in Georgia suffering more from this budget than any other State, \$800 million cut from the Centers For Disease Control when we need all of the help we can get to fight the mounting diseases, life threatening diseases, that are moving across our Nation.

Sixty million dollars have been cut from last year's spending for military construction projects in Georgia, \$366.8 million dollars from 91,050 Georgia children by underfunding No Child Left Behind, \$26.7 million in homeland security funding in Georgia has been cut under this budget, \$7.9 million has been cut from the Georgia Regional Hospital; TRIO programs for almost 13 million Georgians, affecting 13,000 students and many of these students from impoverished backgrounds, many of these students first-time members of college from families. Thirty-seven million dollars have been cut in Perkins scholarships in Georgia. And one particular project, Mr. Speaker, \$75,000 has been cut from an educational and recreational center in Powder Springs in Cobb County, Georgia, in the midst of construction, which halts the construction of this badly needed project.

And let me turn to HOPE VI, one of the most successful housing programs this Nation has ever produced. It is being eliminated completely from the budget, which revitalizes public housing. And in Atlanta, Georgia, in the metropolitan area, HOPE VI is the greatest success story among HOPE VI projects in the entire Nation, but it is costing our community \$120 million in economic loss, not to count the millions that is lost from leveraging those badly needed dollars and improving the surrounding communities. Heartless and cruel are words that come to mind.